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S E C R E T STATE 157300

FOR AMBASSADOR LEANARD

FOLLOWING REPEAT MOSCOW 9055 ACTION SECSTATE JUN 23.
QUOTE S E C R E T MOSCOW 9055

DEPT PASS TO NSC, ACDA, DOD, JCS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, XO, UR

SUBJECT: US-SOVIET WORKING GROUP ON INDIAN OCEAN ARMS
LIMITATIONS: RESTRICTED MEETING JUNE 23

SUMMARY:

MENDELEVICH PUSHED HARD IN JUNE 23 MEETING ON EXCHANGES OF
INFORMATION AND ATA AND ARGUED THAT BASES WERE "KEY
ISSUE" IN TALKS. ON DATA EXCHANGE HE LISTED FOUR SPECIFIC
CATEGORIES FOR WHICH SOVIETS ARE PREPARED TO GIVE FIGURES
(INCLUDING SHIP-DAYS AND TON-DAYS). ON ISSUE OF BASES
HE ARGUED THAT ONES OWN BASES PROVIDE NECESSARY "INFRA-
STRUCTURE" FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RAPID BUILDUP AND
THAT THEY ARE A POLITICAL PROBLEM IN IO AREA AND, THERE-
FORE, SHOULD BE ELIMINATED. HE ALSO GAVE DETAILED DE-
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SCRIPTIONS OF DIEGO GARCIA AND BAHRAIN. IN HIS REMARKS
WARNKE EMPHASIZED NEED TO FOCUS ON LEAST CONTENTIOUS
ISSUES FIRST AND ARGUED FOR FREEZE AT PRESENT LEVEL OF
ACTIVITY, ENDING COMPETITION AND MOVING TO LIMITATIONS
IN STEPS. HE ALSO REPLIED IN GENERAL TERMS
ON BASES COMPARING US FACILITIES TO SOVIET ONES,
PARTICULARLY BERBERA, AND FINALLY HE SUGGESTED THAT

JUNE 24 MEETING ADDRESS QUESTIONS OF GEOGRAPHIC AREA, NAVAL ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELEVANT ELEMENTS AND THAT JUNE 25 MEETING RETURN TO BASES AND ISSUE OF DATA. END SUMMARY.

1. MENDELEVICH OPENED THE RESTRICTED MEETING BY EMPHASIZING SOVIET DESIRE TO COMPARE FACTUAL INFORMATION AND DATA WITH RESPECT TO BASES AND MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA. HE SUGGESTED THAT SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS ADDRESS SIMILARITIES AND COMMON ELEMENTS IN OUR CONCEPTS.

2. WARNKE RESPONDED BY REVIEWING US POSITION ON FOUR POINTS: A) THAT THE QUESTION OF SUPPORT FACILITIES USED RATHER THAN THE QUESTION OF WHOSE BASES ARE IN THE AREA SHOULD BE PRIMARY; B) THAT THE US DOES NOT BELIEVE PROGRESS CAN BE MADE BY DISCUSSING POSSIBLE TYPES OF BANS ON NAVAL FORCES IN THE AREA; C) THAT IT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO HAVE A REASONABLE DEFINITION OF THE AREA IN ORDER TO DISCUSS THE OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO FORCE PRESENCE; D) THAT THE US CONSIDERS THAT FORCES AND ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE INDIAN OCEAN ARE NOT PERTINENT SINCE THEY ARE DESIGNED FOR PURPOSES AND ACTIVITIES UNRELATED TO THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA. THEREFORE, HE SUGGESTED THAT THE TALKS FOCUS ON THE MILITARY
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ACTIVITY PRESENTLY EXISTING IN THE AREA AND THAT WE AGREE TO FREEZE THAT LEVEL OF ACTIVITY IN ORDER TO AVOID AN ESCALATING MILITARY COMPETITION WHICH WOULD ONLY WORSEN BILATERAL RELATIONS.

3. MENDELEVICH, CITING THE VANCE-GROMYKO TALKS IN MARCH, STATED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE TALKS IS TO DISCUSS BASES, MILITARY PRESENCE, AND THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA AND THAT WE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY TURN TO "IDENTIFICATION OF THE FACTS" AND AVOID THEORETICAL DEFINITIONS. HE ADDED A STRONG STATEMENT IN FAVOR OF COMING TO AN UNDERSTANDING "NOT ON A MINIMUM COMMON DENOMINATOR" BUT ON A MAXIMUM AREA OF AGREEMENT IN OUR TWO APPROACHES IN THESE TALKS. HE COMMENTED HOWEVER THAT THERE WERE TWO POINTS WHICH REQUIRED CLARIFICATION AND PROCEEDED TO CHARACTERIZE SOVIET MILITARY BASES AS BEING "VERY FAR REMOVED" FROM THE INDIAN OCEAN, WHILE THE US HAS BASES "VERY CLOSE TO THE AREA." HE ALSO INSISTED THAT THE QUESTION OF ALLIED PRESENCE "MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT" AND PROCEEDED TO ARGUE THAT THE SOVIETS HAD NO ALLIES IN THE AREA.

4. MENDELEVICH THEN LISTED FOUR REASONS FOR CONSIDERING BASES AS "THE KEY ISSUE" IN THE DISCUSSIONS. HE CLAIMED, FIRST, THAT THEY PROVIDE A STABLE SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR NAVAL AND AIR FORCES, I.E., AN INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA FOR SUCH FORCES. SECONDLY, THAT FACILITIES ALLOW FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC PLANS AND INTENTIONS WITHOUT HAVING TO ADJUST TO FIT SOMEONE ELSE'S FACILITIES. THIRDLY, BASES ALLOW FOR "RAPID BUILDUP" OF FORCES NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT MILITARY OPERATIONS. FINALLY, HE NOTED THAT MILITARY BASES IN THE AREA GIVE RISE TO SHARPLY NEGATIVE REACTIONS ON THE PART OF CERTAIN STATES

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IN THE AREA AND CAUSE TENSIONS WHICH WOULD NOT BE PRESENT IF THE BASES WERE NOT THERE.

5. WARNKE RESPONDED BY ARGUING THAT WE MUST STOP THE COMPETITION AND LIMIT AND REDUCE FORCES IN THE AREA BY STEPS. THAT THE BASIC ISSUE THEREFORE WAS WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN FIRST AND WHAT PRIORITIES SHOULD WE HAVE IN SCALING DOWN OUR ACTIVITIES AND PRESENCE IN THE AREA.

6. MENDELEVICH SUGGESTED STARTING WITH AN EXCHANGE OF DATA WITH RESPECT TO SHIPS PRESENT IN THE AREA AND INDICATED THAT THE SOVIETS BELIEVE THAT "TON-DAYS" IS THE MOST RELIABLE METHOD FOR EVALUATING SHIP PRESENCE. HE SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO EXCHANGE ON A RECIPROCAL BASIS DATA IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES (EACH ONE DIVIDED INTO WARSHIPS AND AUXILIARIES):

1) THE ENTIRE NUMBER OF SHIPS PRESENT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN IN 1976; 2) THE NUMBERS OF THESE SHIPS PRESENT "PERMANENTLY" AND "TEMPORARILY"; 3) THE NUMBER OF THE SHIP-DAYS OF ALL SHIPS; 4) THE NUMBER OF TON-DAYS OF ALL SHIPS.

7. MENDELEVICH CLAIMED THAT THE "MOST REALISTIC" EVALUATION IN SOVIET OPINION WAS THAT OF TON-DAYS BUT TO SHOW FLEXIBILITY THEY WERE WILLING TO EXCHANGE DATA ON SHIP-DAYS. AMBASSADOR WARNKE INDICATED THAT WE WERE NOT IMMEDIATELY PREPARED TO EXCHANGE DATA ON THIS POINT AND SUGGESTED WE RETURN TO THE ISSUE ON SATURDAY.

8. MENDELEVICH THEN SAID IN THE TIME REMAINING HE WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON

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BASES AND PROCEEDED TO DESCRIBE DIEGO GARCIA AND BAHRAIN WITH DETAILS OF THE SIZE AND NATURE OF US FACILITIES (COMMENT: HIS INFORMATION APPEARED BASICALLY TO COME FROM ALREADY RELEASED US DATA.)

9. MENDELEVICH THEN REASSERTED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS NO BASES OF ITS OWN, NOR ANY WHICH IT CONTROLS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN WHICH CORRESPOND TO THE AMERICAN BASES OF DIEGO GARCIA AND BAHRAIN. HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THERE WERE OTHER BASES "OF YOUR ALLIES" WHICH US USES AND WHICH HE WOULD ADDRESS AT SOME LATER POINT.

10. AMBASSADOR WARNKE REPLIED BY DESCRIBING OUR FACILITIES ON DIEGO GARCIA AND BAHRAIN IN GENERAL TERMS AND NOTING THAT WE CONSIDER THE SOVIET USE OF BASES AT BERBERA, SOMALIA, UM QSAR, AND ADEN TO MORE THAN OFFSET THE RATHER LIMITED FACILITIES WHICH THE US USES AT DIEGO AND BAHRAIN. HE STATED THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS OVERALL USE OF THE FACILITIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN WITH THE SOVIETS BUT WE WILL NOT SIMPLY DISCUSS DIEGO GARCIA AND BAHRAIN. HE SUGGESTED THAT WE RETURN TO THIS QUESTION IN THE SATURDAY MEETING.

11. MENDELEVICH CLOSED THE MEETING BY SUGGESTING THAT THE JUNE 24 PLENARY MEETING DISCUSS "SEVERAL CONCEPTUAL ASPECTS" SUCH AS IDEAS REGARDING THE ADJACENT AREAS AND THE PRACTICAL FACTOR OF ALLIED PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. WARNKE RESPONDED THAT WE WOULD WISH TO EXPAND ON THE BASIC CONCEPTS

WHICH WE HAVE OUTLINED REGARDING GEOGRAPHIC AREA,

NAVAL ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELEVANT ELEMENTS.

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12. AMBASSADOR WARNKE ALSO RAISED THE RADIO MOSCOW ANNOUNCEMENT (STATE 145047) WHICH HE SAID DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO THE AGREEMENT WHICH WAS REACHED ON HANDLING PRESS ANNOUNCEMENTS REGARDING THESE CONSULTATIONS. MENDELEVICH, SOMEWHAT TAKEN ABACK, ASSURED US SIDE THAT HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY LOOK INTO THE MATTER AND THAT HE WAS COMPLETELY CERTAIN THAT NO

INFORMATION OTHER THAN THE AGREED PRESS RELEASE WAS
MADE AVAILABLE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HE SUGGESTED RADIO
MOSCOW WAS USING PRIOR PRESS GUIDANCE BASED ON
STATEMENTS BY SECRETARY GENERAL BREZHNEV AND
NOTED THAT THE 10 AM GMT TIME OF THE BROADCAST
OCCURRED BEFORE THE END OF THE JUNE 22 LUNCHEON
AND COULD NOT THEREFORE BE ATTRIBUTED TO A LEAK
FROM THE SOVIET DELEGATION.
TOON UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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